

Instructional Excellence in Early Childhood Classrooms Feedback

Levers to move instructional excellence forward



How can we use lessons learned to scale up excellence?

Embedded professional development is key to sustainable quality improvements.

We need to know who has embedded professional development and who needs it. We also need to examine state and local policies to identify any barriers to implementing effective embedded PD.

Coaching—coupled with knowledge building—is an effective mechanism for change.

Coaches drive embedded professional development. We need to build coaching capacity through creating a coaching curriculum and competencies. Coaching should count toward professional development requirements.

Teachers need time during their day to plan, reflect, and consider data.

We need to create time for teachers to plan AND reflect. Teachers need to reflect on their practice and data in order to improve their teaching. Supports are needed to provide staff with time to accomplish this.

Professional learning communities can support excellence in instruction AND continuity of curriculum.

Excellence is sustained when teachers and instructional leaders regularly meet to reflect on their practice and the outcomes they are seeing in children and families. Professional learning communities can also build a bridge between K-12 and ECE; the Child Parent Center model can inform these efforts moving forward.

Leaders play an integral role in influencing quality.

Leaders can empower program staff by sharing responsibility. Leaders need to understand what factors determine quality in early childhood. Leaders themselves need support so they can sustain quality improvement efforts over time.

High-quality instruction requires collaboration from everyone.

Everyone has a role in instruction. A collaborative conversation, like this conference, needs to happen on community levels with greater teacher involvement.

Programs need to be aware of and utilize resources in the community.

Coaching and embedded support must continue even after grant-funded interventions end. All programs need to be aware of the available sustainable community resources.

What's Next?

The Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development will lead an interagency review of what Illinois considers "instructional excellence" in early childhood and how our existing state policies do or do not support this excellence. We will work with our public and private sector partners to identify how we can better support highly effective embedded professional development, coaching, and instructional leadership across all early childhood programs in our state.